TOWN OF CHILHOWIE

Mayor: Gary L. Heninger
Council: Billy L. Clear
Shannon Donnelly
J. Brent Foster
Bob Jeter
Julie Sturgill
P.J. Wolfe

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Town Manager: Brian Martin
Clerk-Treasurer: Felicia C. Eller
Police Chief: Andrew K. Moss
Director-Public Works: Tyler Keen
Fire /EMS Chief: C. David Haynes
Building Official: C. David Haynes
Wastewater Operations: Luke A. Lowe
Water Operations: Don Cole, II
Recreation/Special Events Coordinator: Stephen Fields
Buildings, Streets, & Grounds: Christopher Johnson
Legal: Cassell & Crewe, P.C.

Town Manager's Report to Mayor and Town Council
August 14, 2025

Good evening, Mayor Heninger and Members of the Town Council. Here's a brief look at what's going on in our town:

Hurricane Helene Recovery

The town staff continues to work with FEMA, our engineering partners, wastewater project contractors, and appropriate regulatory agencies to work towards full restoration of infrastructure impacted by Hurricane Helene last Fall. All repairs are now complete related to the town's water system. Upon FEMA approval, the final amenities to complete the repairs in the Town Park were ordered. This consists of four park benches and a screen for use at the ball field. Additionally, Chief Haynes is currently working with Ms. Eller to develop a solid plan for the final repairs at the Fire Training Center which will be approved by FEMA.

As you're aware, the largest component to our town being completely repaired from the storm is the reconstruction of the three aerial sewer crossings. You may remember that after a lengthy review process from state and Federal agencies, the town was able to bid the project with the help of our engineering consultants at Hurt & Proffitt. A pre-bid conference was held on June 26th and bids were due on July 16th. Two bids were received. The winning bidder is Portland Utilities Construction Company, which already has significant knowledge of the town's wastewater system due to their recent history with the sewer improvement project listed below.

A pre-construction conference is scheduled for August 20th, where town staff, Hurt & Proffitt, Portland Utilities, and representatives from our funding and regulatory agencies will meet for final planning as the contractor stages for construction initiation as we strive to commence work in September which will allow us to undertake the work located in the river on October 1, which is the date we are approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to access the water while still abiding by endangered species stream restrictions.

We plan to begin work at the crossing behind Chilhowie Middle/High School and then proceed to the crossing just below the Tattle Branch Bridge. Reconstruction of these two aerials will allow the removal of the temporary wastewater bypass that will result in a savings to the town of over $17,000 per month.

After our pre-construction conference, we should have a reasonably accurate project timeline that I can share with you in next month's report.

I would like to again thank Ms. Diana Thompson from FEMA for her outstanding support since she has taken over at the town's FEMA representative. Also, I cannot begin to express my gratitude to your staff for helping corral these repairs and itemized expenses over the past eleven months. Finally, I would like to give a special thank you to Ms. Eller who has done a top-notch job of keeping me and the other department heads on point with the requirements that FEMA had set forth. Without her dedication, the town would not be receiving reimbursements anywhere near the level that we are.

Sewer Improvement Project Update

The town's contractor, Portland Utilities, continues to wrap up small "punch list" tasks as this project winds down toward completion. Change Order #3, which you approved last month, is now underway and will address issues with leaking and unstable manholes in two areas and will replace approximately 700 feet of old sewer pipe along Sunset Drive. This line was not part of the original scope of work, but was identified by Public Works a few months ago and, after assessing the condition of this line, has been deemed a key area of I&I (Inflow and Infiltration).

Public Works has identified a final manhole in our system that we hope to address in a Change Order #4. Portland Utilities is compiling cost estimates at this time and I hope to have a plan to present to you at September's Town Council meeting.

As a reminder, this $3.9 million project was funded through pilot program funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, so project reporting to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will be ongoing for two years after project completion and closeout.

VDOT Communications

The drainage issues related to the damaged metal grate on Whitetop Road across from McDonalds have now been completed. Final construction was wrapped up two weeks ago. This has resulted in a much-improved drainage system, while improving traffic safety and reducing the possibility of damage to vehicles that may erroneously drive over the grate. I reached out to VDOT to express our town's thanks for finalizing this project after two years of planning.

At Mayor Heninger's request, I reached out to VDOT to request the most recent traffic count information for our community. Attached to this report is the 2023 data that shows average daily traffic counts for both northbound and southbound lanes on Interstate 81 at Exit 35 as well as all lanes of travel at our town's main intersection of U.S. Highway 11 and State Route 107.

Upon the departure of his predecessor, one of Chilhowie's native sons has been appointed as interim Residency Administrator for the Abingdon Residency. Mr. Matthew Lewis is serving in this temporary capacity in addition to his primary role as Maintenance Director for the Bristol District of Interstates 81 and 77. I wish him well in this role.

After hearing the concerns of multiple business owners on Main Street, I reached out to VDOT to request that they look into signage options that could help better highlight our town's historic district and the businesses located there. I hope to have information to share with you later this year.

As a reminder, VDOT has scheduled construction to begin on the Interstate bridges at mile marker 34 in early 2027. Construction is slated to be for 30 months.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Permitting Renewal

The town is currently working with Hurt & Proffitt and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality to renew our operating permit under the Virginia Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (VPDES). This renewal is required every five years and this is the first renewal since the town moved away from land application of biosolids and also the first since monitoring for PFAS is required.

The staff continues to take the steps required for permit renewal. As a reminder, the town's current discharge permit expires May 3, 2026.

2024 Enterprise Zone Reporting

Over a handful of days in early July, Chief Haynes, Ms. Eller, and I compiled the data to complete the Enterprise Zone reports for Calendar Year 2024. This data is submitted by each of Smyth's localities to the Smyth County Chamber of Commerce, which then submits the data to Smyth County for reporting to state economic development agencies. I have attached a copy of this data to this report for your review. I have also attached a map of Chilhowie's section of Virginia Enterprise Zone 51 identified as the Smyth/Washington/Chilhowie/Glade Spring zone as well as the statewide map which is coordinated by the Virginia Department of Housing Development and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership.

Mount Rogers Regional Cigarette Tax Board

I represented Chilhowie at the July 23rd quarterly meeting of the Mount Rogers Regional Cigarette Tax Board. We continue to see a downward trend in tobacco tax collections as a result of the societal transition from tobacco products to other options such as marijuana and vape products.

Improved Water Capacity/WCSA

To address increased demand and to also plan for contingencies, the town continues to investigate the viability of bringing back online a former town spring that was brought offline in the early 1990s. Mr. Don Cole approached me about this possibility a few months ago and since that time, the town staff have begun to sample the spring's outflow, measure high flow/low flow volumes, etc. After initial positive results, the town has begun to partner with the Washington County Service Authority and the Virginia Department of Health (VDH). Mr. Cole and I met with both entities on July 28th and were given approval by VDH to continue our investigation process. I commend Mr. Cole, the town's Water/Wastewater operators and our Public Works staff for leading these efforts.

Restaurant Recruitment

I have reached out to the ownership company of several franchised restaurants to notify them that Chilhowie is eager to locate another nationally recognized restaurant in our town. To date, these efforts have borne no fruit, but I continue to make efforts to market this community.

Mount Rogers Water/Wastewater Fund

Annual funding applications for this $586,000 pool of funding were posted in late July. This year, our staff intends to apply for funding to refurbish the water tank at the Widener Spring. A resolution of support is included in your agenda packet for your consideration. Applications are due no later than August 29th and we anticipate notifications from Mount Rogers in late September or October.

Virginia Energy Visit

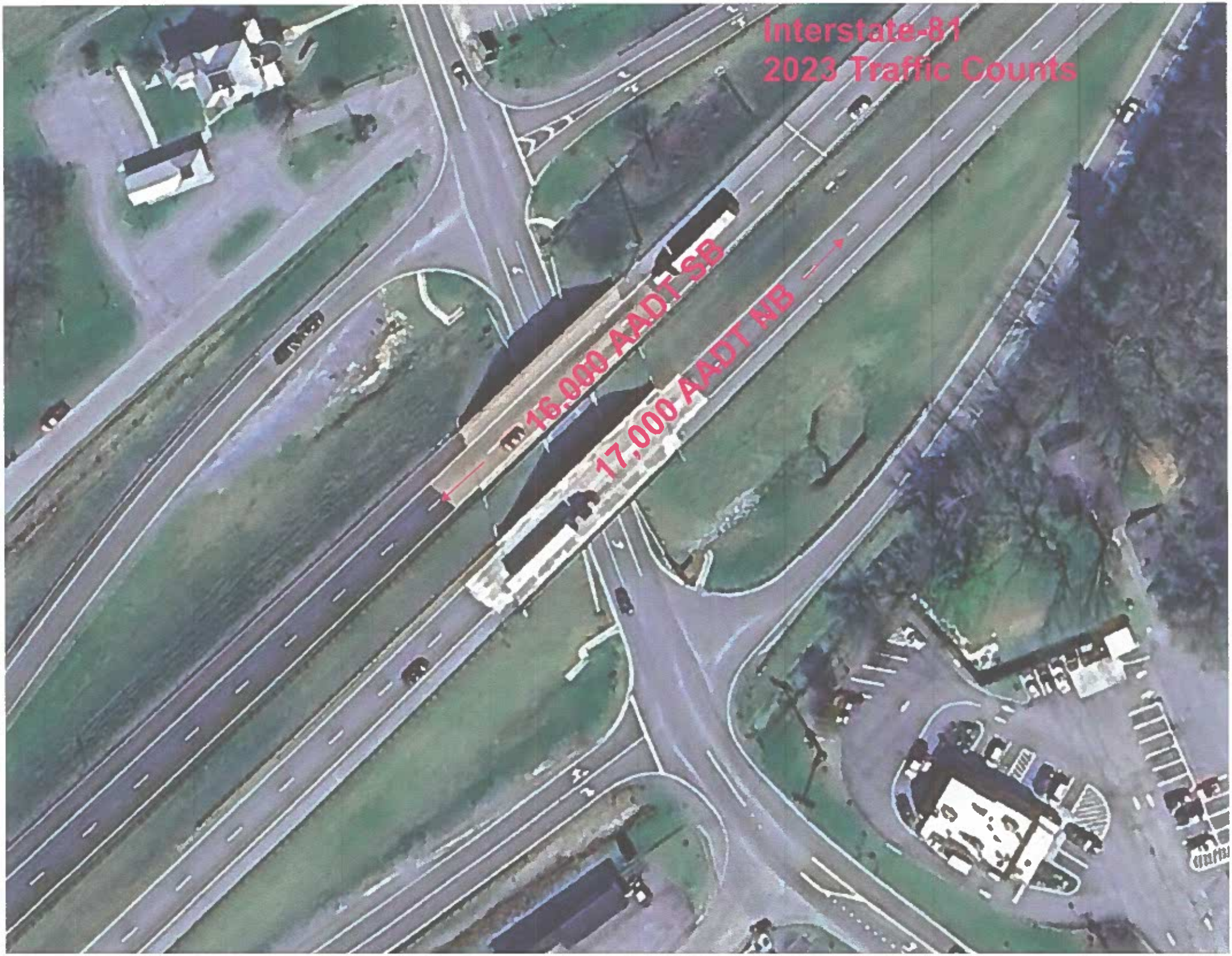
I continue to converse with Virginia Energy about possibilities for Chilhowie such as options for supplemental solar power at the wastewater treatment plant, electric vehicle charging stations, a town facility energy audit, etc. Representatives from Virginia Energy traveled from Richmond to meet with me on August 11th to discuss ideas and tour our facilities. I'm hopeful that this may lead to some projects that could reduce the power expenditures at our town-owned facilities.

Questions

As always, I welcome any questions about the status of the town's busy activities. Thank you as always for all you do for our town!

Respectfully Submitted,

J. Brian Martin
Town Manager


Interstate-81
2023 Traffic Counts
16,000 AADT SB
17,000 AADT NB

1536 AADT
1664 AADT
2693 AADT
2407 AADT
3836 AADT
3564 AADT
6684 AADT
5316 AADT
Route 11/Route 107 Int.
2023 Traffic Counts

Brian Martin

From: Heath, Pamela, P.E. (VDOT) <pamela.heath@vdot.virginia.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 12:12 PM
To: Brian Martin
Cc: Felicia Eller; Dotson, Derick (VDOT); Lewis, Matthew (VDOT Bristol)
Subject: RE: Chilhowie Traffic Data
Attachments: Routes 11-107 AADT.pdf; Interstate-81 AADT.pdf

Brian,

The traffic counts for both the interstate at exit 35 and the Route 11/107 intersection follow:

Route 11 from Smyth County line to Route 107	1664 NB, 1536 SB
Route 11 from Route 107 to Route 638	3564 NB, 3036 SB
Route 107 from I-81 to Route 11	6684 NB, 5316 SB
Route 107 from Route 11 to Saltville	2693 NB, 2407 SB

Interstate 81 NB	17,000
Interstate 81 SB	16,000

I've attached two pdf files showing the traffic counts on each road in plan view. The latest traffic counts available are from year 2023.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,
Pam

Pamela W. Heath, PE
Assistant Residency Engineer- Abingdon Residency
Virginia Department of Transportation
276-525-6463 ofc
276-591-6837 cell
pamela.heath@VDOT.Virginia.gov

From: Brian Martin <bmartin@chilhowieva.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 12:15 PM
To: Harrison, Jeff W (VDOT) <jeffw.harrison@vdot.virginia.gov>; Heath, Pamela, P.E. (VDOT) <pamela.heath@vdot.virginia.gov>; Dotson, Derick (VDOT) <derick.dotson@vdot.virginia.gov>
Cc: Felicia Eller <feller@chilhowieva.gov>
Subject: Chilhowie Traffic Data

Good Afternoon:

Would it be possible to obtain current traffic information for the following:

- Total vehicle count on both north and southbound I-81 traffic at Exit 35

- Total vehicle count at the traffic light in Chilhowie at the intersection of Hwy 11 and Hwy 107 (the only light in town 😊)

Thank you for any assistance you can provide. As always, I appreciate you!

B

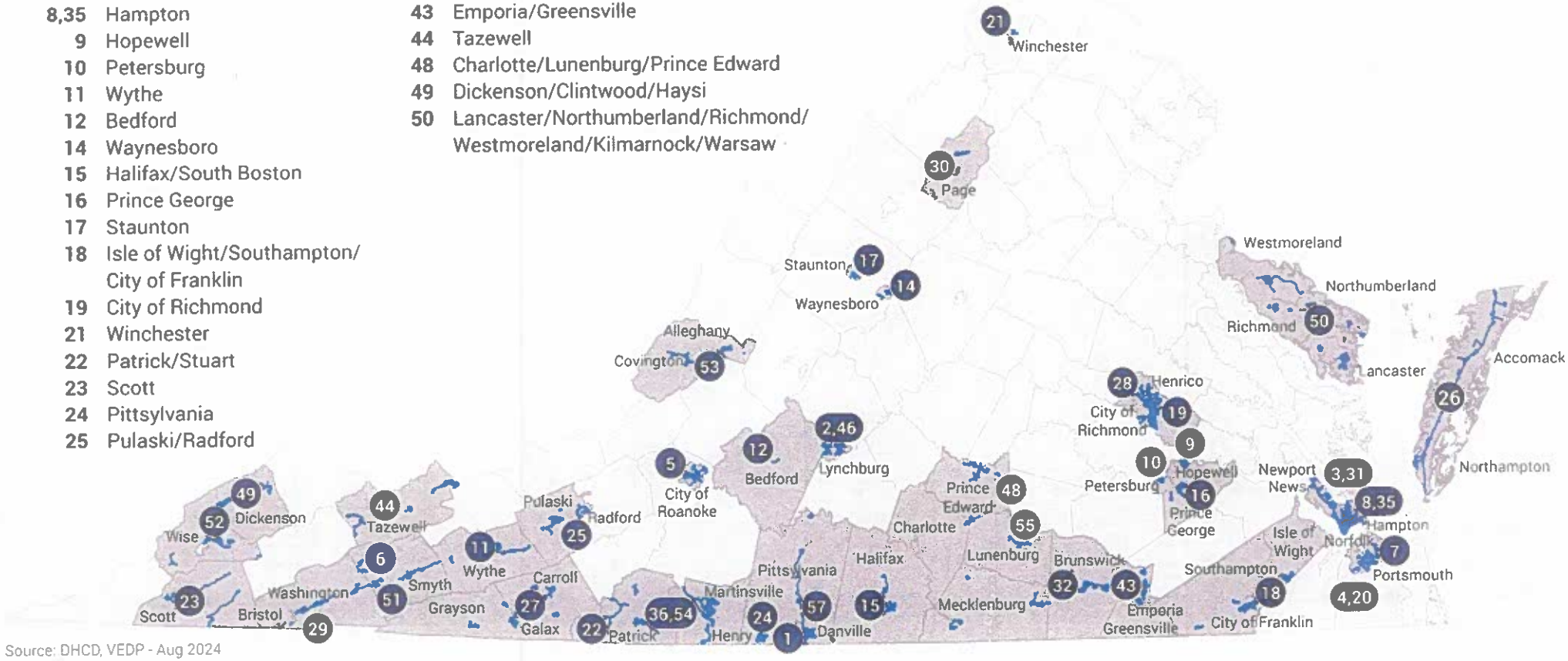
J. Brian Martin
Town Manager
Town of Chilhowie
P.O. Box 5012
325 East Lee Highway
Chilhowie VA 24319
276.646.3232
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Private Investment in Zone: Calendar Year 2024		
New Construction		
Type of Permit	**Number of Permits**	**Total Investment**
Manufacturing		
Commercial	2	$55,000.00
Office		
Retail	3	$260,000.00
Mixed-use		
Subtotal	5	$315,000.00
Rehab and Expansion		
Type of Permit	**Number of Permits**	**Total Investment**
Manufacturing		
Commercial		
Office		
Retail		
Mixed-use		
Subtotal	0	$0.00
Total	**5**	**$315,000.00**

Public Investment in Zone: Calendar Year 2024		
Infrastructure		
Type of Investment	**Total Investment**	**Description**
Streets/Sidewalks		
Water	$50,000.00	town replaced several outdated meters to improve water accountability
Sewer	$2,300,000.00	Town completed a sewer improvement project to reduce I&I
Broadband		
Other		
Subtotal	$2,350,000.00	
Public Buildings		
Type of Investment	**Total Investment**	**Description**
Improvements	$300,000.00	Renovations completed at Chilhowie High School
New Construction		
Subtotal	$300,000.00	
Parks and Schools		
Type of Investment	**Total Investment**	**Description**
Improvements		
New Construction	$224,000.00	The town constructed a dog park/recreation area to improve community amenities
Subtotal	$224,000.00	
Total	**$2,874,000.00**	

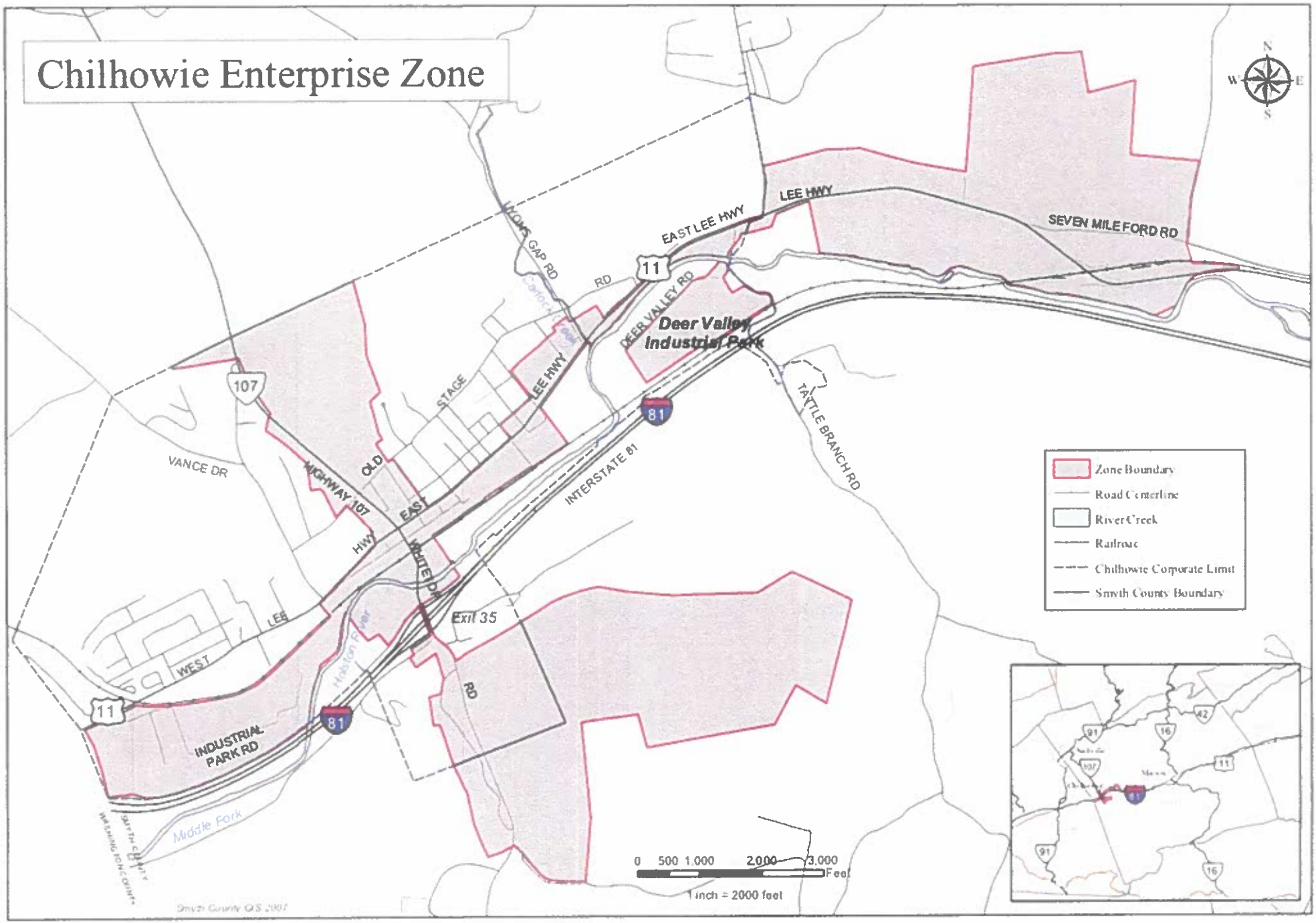
Enterprise Zones

1	Danville
2,46	Lynchburg
3,31	Newport News
4,20	Portsmouth
5	City of Roanoke
6	Saltville/Smyth
7	Norfolk
8,35	Hampton
9	Hopewell
10	Petersburg
11	Wythe
12	Bedford
14	Waynesboro
15	Halifax/South Boston
16	Prince George
17	Staunton
18	Isle of Wight/Southampton/ City of Franklin
19	City of Richmond
21	Winchester
22	Patrick/Stuart
23	Scott
24	Pittsylvania
25	Pulaski/Radford
26	Accomack/Northampton
27	Carroll/Galax/Grayson
28	City of Richmond/Henrico
29	Bristol
30	Page
36,54	Martinsville/Henry
32	Brunswick/Mecklenburg
43	Emporia/Greensville
44	Tazewell
48	Charlotte/Lunenburg/Prince Edward
49	Dickenson/Clintwood/Haysi
50	Lancaster/Northumberland/Richmond/ Westmoreland/Kilmarnock/Warsaw
51	Smyth/Washington/Chilhowie/Glade Spring
52	Wise
53	Alleghany/Covington/Clifton Forge
55	Lunenburg/Kenbridge/Victoria
57	Pittsylvania/Danville



Source: DHCD, VEDP - Aug 2024

Enterprise Zone Designation | Enterprise Zone Boundary | Locality with Enterprise Zone


Chilhowie Enterprise Zone
LEE HWY
SEVEN MILE FORD RD
EAST LEE HWY
11
WOLFE GAP RD
RD
DEER VALLEY RD
Deer Valley Industrial Park
107
STAGE
LEE HWY
81
TATTLE BRANCH RD
VANCE DR
HIGHWAY 107
OLD
EAST
HWY
INTERSTATE 81
WHITE PINE
Exit 35
LEE
WEST
11
INDUSTRIAL PARK RD
81
RD
Middle Fork
SMYTH COUNTY
WASHINGTON COUNTY
Smyth County GIS 2007
Zone Boundary
Road Centerline
River/Creek
Railroad
Chilhowie Corporate Limit
Smyth County Boundary
0 500 1,000 2,000 3,000
Feet
1 inch = 2000 feet
N
W
E
S